

# *Sketch*

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## The World Goes On

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# The World Goes On

Mary Alice Whitson

## **Abstract**

I STAND at the top of the hill, but the road goes on, just as the world will always go on. This was to have been my perfect day. I knew this morning as I hung the clean, wet clothes that this was the way I had wanted it to be...

# The World Goes On

Mary Alice Whitson

**I** STAND at the top of the hill, but the road goes on, just as the world will always go on.

This was to have been my perfect day. I knew this morning as I hung the clean, wet clothes that this was the way I had wanted it to be. October is my favorite month and all of its good points seemed to have reached perfection this morning: the sky was the right shade of cool blue, the sun was warm but distant, the cornfields bright yellow, the wind had the right amount of zest; everything had an acuteness about it.

And now I stand here while the road goes on toward the blue sky and the yellow cornfields. I am so still I can feel the world revolving under my feet—and without me. The wind feels my cheek and passes on. Your last letter, carried under my dress, has changed from a burning living thing into a corner of sharp paper cutting soft skin; only paper, for the words have ceased to be magic.

I hope you gain peace, for that is what you have sought. You were once willing to stand with me and watch the social order critically, curiously. But to be always part of it is the only way to be contented, the only way for you. You are right; I would not let you be contented. And your children would not have peace of mind, if I were their mother. I would raise them in your church, but I would say, "This is not the only religion; there are many great and beautiful religions. We have no way of knowing which is right; probably they all are." And so it would be with all things. You are right.

And I will learn that the world keeps right on, even when I feel empty; I will do the same things. I will go home now, and fold up the clean clothes, and get supper, and stand with limp hands in the dishwater. And some day maybe I will no longer be aware of the world spinning under my feet, and I will move with it again.